

nucleotides 165504 -166166 and determining the presence of EBV-positive epithelial tumor cells.

16. (New) The method according to claim 15 wherein the pairs of oligonucleotides used in the amplification of the respective RNA(s) are selected from the group consisting of:

-a pair of oligonucleotides specific for **EBNA-1** consisting of

5'-CTCCCTTTACAACCTAAGGC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 2], and

5'-AGAGACAAGGTCCTTAATCGCATCC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 3]

provided with a T7 polymerase promoter sequence 5'-aattctaatacgactcactataggg-3';

and

-a pair of oligonucleotides specific for **BARF-1** consisting of

5'-GGCTGTCACCGCTTTCTTGG-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 23], and

5'-AGTGTTGGCACTTCTGTGG-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 24], provided with a T7 polymerase promoter sequence 5'-

aattctaatacgactcactataggg-3'.

17. (New) The method according to claim 15, wherein the RNA is amplified using a transcription based amplification technique.

18 (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein said amplification technique is NASBA.

19. (New) An oligonucleotide, corresponding to part of a nucleic acid sequence encoding Epstein Barr Virus, said oligonucleotide being 10-35 nucleotides in length comprising at least a fragment of 10 nucleotides of a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

-the BKRF1 reading frame spanning nucleotides 107950 - 109872 of EBNA-1, and

-the BARF1 reading frame spanning nucleotides 165504 -166166.

20 (New) The oligonucleotide according to claim 19, being 10-35 nucleotides in length comprising at least a fragment of 10 nucleotides of a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- 5'-GCCGGTGTGTTGTTTCGTATATGG-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 1], (EBNA-1),
 - 5'-CTCCCTTTACAACCTAAGGC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 2], (EBNA-1),
 - 5'-AGAGACAAGGTCCTTAATCGCATCC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 3], (EBNA-1), or
 - 5'-AATACAGACAATGGACTCCC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 4], (EBNA-1),
 - 5'-CAGGTTTCATCGCTCAGCTCC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 22], (BARF-1),
 - 5'-GGCTGTCACCGCTTTCTTGG-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 23], (BARF-1),
 - 5'-AGTGTGGCACTTCTGTGG-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 24], (BARF-1), or
 - 5'-AGCATGGGAGATGTTGGCAGC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 25], (BARF-1),
- and their complementary sequences.

21. (New) An oligonucleotide according to claim 19 linked to a promoter sequence.

22. (New) An oligonucleotide according to claim 20 linked to a promoter sequence.

23. (New) A pair of oligonucleotides, for the amplification of a target sequence within an Epstein Barr virus sequence, for use as a set, comprising:

- 5'-CTCCCTTTACAACCTAAGGC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 2], and
 - 5'-AGAGACAAGGTCCTTAATCGCATCC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 3] provided with a T7 polymerase promoter sequence 5'-aattctaatacgactcactataggg-3' (EBNA-1);
- or
- 5'-GGCTGTCACCGCTTTCTTGG-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 23], and

Sub E5
of
one

5'-AGTGTGGCACTTCTGTGG-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 24], provided with a T7 polymerase promoter sequence 5'-aattctaatacgactcactataggg-3' (BARF-1).

24. (New) An oligonucleotide according to claim 19, being 10-35 nucleotides in length comprising at least a fragment of 10 nucleotides of the sequence selected from the group consisting of:

5'-CGTCTCCCCTTTGGAATGGCCCCTGGACCC-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 5] (EBNA-1), provided with a detectable label; or

5'-CTGGTTTAAACTGGGCCAGGAGAGGAGCA-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 26] (BARF1), provided with a detectable label.

25. (New) A test kit for performing the method of claim 15 comprising:
-one or more oligonucleotides according to any of claims 19-22,
-an oligonucleotide comprising a nucleic acid sequence substantially complementary to at least part of the amplified nucleic acid sequence, provided with a detectable label, and
-suitable amplification reagents.

26. (New) A test kit according to claim 24, wherein said oligonucleotide that is provided with a detectable label is an oligonucleotide being 10-35 nucleotides in length comprising at least a fragment of 10 nucleotides of the sequence set forth as 5'-CTGGTTTAAACTGGGCCAGGAGAGGAGCA-3' [SEQ.ID.NO.: 26] (BARF1).